A Lamentable Ballad of the Tragical end of

A Gallant Lord and Virtuous Lady;

Together with the Untimely Death of their two Children.

IN Rome a nobleman did wed
A virgin of great fame,
Fairer creature never did,
Dame nature ever frame,
By whom he had too children fair,
Whom beauty did excel.
They were their parents only joy,
They lov'd them both so well,
The lord he lov'd to hunt the buck,
The tiger and the boar,
And still for swiftness always took,
With him a blackamoor,
Which blackamoor within the wood,
His lord he did offend,
For which he did him then correct,
In hopes he would amend.
The day it grew unto an end,
Then homewards he did haste,
Where with his lady he did rest,
Until the night was past,
Then in the morning he did rise,
And did his servants call.
A hunting he provides to go,
And they were ready all,
To ease his toil the lady did,
Intreat him not to go.
Alas! good lady then quoth he,
Why art thou grieved so,
Content thyself I will return
With speed to thee again
Good father quoth the little babes,
With us here still remain.
For well dear children I will go,
A fine thing for to buy,
But they to ewith nothing content,
Aloud began to cry,
The mother takes them by the hand
Saying come go with me
Unto the highest tower where
You father you shall see,
The blackamoor perceiving now
He then did stay behind,
His lord to be a hunting gone,
Then to call to mind
My master he did me correct,
My fault not being great,
Now of his wife I'll be revenged,
She shall not me intreat,
The place was moated round about,
The bridge he up did draw,
The gates he bolted very fast,
Of none he stood in awe,
He up into the tower went,
The lady being there,
Who when she saw his countenance grim,
She strait began to fear,
But now my trembling heart it quakes,
To think what I must write,
My senses all begin to fail,
My soul it doth affright;
Yet must I make an end of this,
Which ere I have begun,
Which will make sad the hardest heart,
Before it I have done.
This wretch unto the lady went,
And her with speed did will,
His just forthwith to satisfy,
His revenge to fulfill.
The lady she amazed was,
To hear the villain speak,
Alas! quoth she, what shall I do,
With grief my heart will break,
With that he took her in his arms,
She strait for help did cry,
Content yourself lady he said,
Your husband is not nigh,
The bridges drawn the gates are shut,
Therefore come lie with me,
Or else I do protest and vow
Thy butcher I will be,
The crystal tears ran down her face,
Her children cry'd amain,
And fought to help their mother dear,
But all it was in vain.
For that egregious filthy rogue,
Her hands behind her bound,
And then by force with all his might

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He threw her on the ground,
With that she shrieks, her children cry'd,
And such a noise did make,
The town folks hearing her lament,
Did seek their barrs to take,
But all in vain, no way was found,
To help this lady's need,
Who cry'd to them most pitiously
O help, O help, with speed,
Some run into the forest wide,
Her lord home for to call
And they that stood still did lament,
This gallant lady's fall,
With speed her lord came posting home,
He could not enter in,
His lady's cries did pierce his heart,
To call he did begin,
O hold thy hand thou savage moor,
To hurt her do forbear,
Or else be sure if I do live,
Wild horses shall thee tear.
With that the rogue run to the wall,
He having had his will,
And brought one child unto the wall,
His dearest blood to spill.
The child seeing his father there,
To him for help did call,
O father help my mother dear,
We shall be killed all.
Then fell upon his knees,
And did the more intreat,
To save the life of his poor child,
Whose fear was then so great,
But this vile wretch the little child
By both his heels did take,
And dash'd his brains against the wall,
While parents tears did ake.
That being done away he run,
The other child to fetch,
And pluck'd it from the mother's breast,
Most like a cruel wretch.
Within one hand a knife he brought,
The child within the other,
And holding it against the wall,
Saying thus dies shall thy mother,
With that he cut the throat
Then to the father he did call,
To look how he the same had cut,
Then down the wall her head did fall,
This done he threw it down the wall
Into the moate so deep,
Which made the father wring his hands,
And grievously to weep.

Who was near dead with fears
Yet this vile wretch most cruelly,
Did drag her by the hair,
And drew her to the very wall,
Which when her lord did see,
Then presently he cried out,
And fell upon his knee,
Quoth he if thou wilt save her life
Whom I do love so dear,
I will forgive thee all that is past,
Though they concern me near,
O save her life I thee beseech,
O save her life I tee pray,
And I will grant thee what thou wilt,
Demand of me this day,
Well quoth the moor, I do regard
The moan that thou dost make
If thou wilt grant me what I ask,
I'll save her for thy sake.
O save her life and then demand
Of me what thing thou wilt.
Cut off thy nose and not one drop
Of her blood shall be spilt,
With that the lord presently took
A knife within his hand,
And then his nose he quite cut off
In place where he did stand.
Now I have bought my lady's life,
Then to the Moor did call,
Then take her quoth this wicked rogue,
And down he let her fall,
Which when her gallant lord did see,
His senses all did fail,
Yet many sought to save his life,
Yet nothing could prevail,
When as the Moor did see him dead,
Then did he laugh amain,
At them who for his gallant lord
And lady did complain,
Quoth he I know you'll torture me,
If that you can me get,
But all your threats I do not fear
Nor yet regard one whit.
Wild horses will my body tear,
I know it to be true,
But I'll prevent you of that sport,
And down himself he threw,
Too good a death for such a wretch,
A villain void of fear,
And thus doth end as sad a tale,
As ever man did hear.

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